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Dennis Patterson Photo

The driver of this van, heavily damaged this morning, is in serious condition.

Crash Plugs Canyon for Hours

By PAT CHRISTIAN
Herald Staff Writer

A Nebraska man was in serious condition this morning following a spectacular re-dawn crash in Provo Canyon between his luxury van and a semi-truck.

Orem Police Corporal Dennis Lea said Richard L. McGee, 42, of Nebraska apparently crossed in front of coming traffic seconds before his van was struck by a tractor trailer rigdriven by Douglas Alan Ruff of Riverside, Calif. The police corporal said the truck driver, whose tractor received extensive damage but who escaped injury, told police he was westbound when the driver of the van

crossed in front of him moments before the two collided head-on.

Patricia Ruff, the truck driver's wife, was injured slightlyin the accident, and was treated and released from Utah Valley Hospital.

A hospital spokesman this morning said the driver of the van stable was in serious condition with fractured ribs and internal injuries. At press time he was in surgery for his internal injuries.

Lea said McGee was alone in his vehicle, traveling east. After the crash — about eight-tenths of a mile east of the mouth of Provo Canyon — a seriously injured McGee

was trapped in his severely twisted 1982 Ford van for nearly two hours.

Paramedics, police and rescue workers fought to extricate the bleeding man and finally resorted to cutting off the roof of the twisted wreckage.

At one point, diesel fuel from the truck tractor, which had spilt on the canyon road, caught fire, but firemen standing by quickly extinguished it.

Lea said the driver of the luxury van's watch was stopped at 3:55 a.m., indicating the time of the crash.

He said canyon traffic was blocked for about three hours.

Kean Evans, a wrecker driver who lives in Provo Canyon and who towed the van away, said he watched as workers tried to extricate the driver of the van.

He said using power tools, rescuers cut the top of the twisted van on the driver's side from the front to the back, and then used a winch on a fire truck to open the van like a sardine can so workers could remove the injured driver.

Evans said, "the man was bloody from head to foot and moaning throughout the rescue. This is the worst damage I have seen to a vehicle when anyone survived."

Susie 'Works Hard' For Lunch

By DAWN TRACY
Herald Staff Writer

When Susie Jepperson wakes at 5:30 a.m., most of the children whose lunches she'll prepare that day still are sound asleep.

It's something she's done for the last 20 years.

Susie doesn't have to arrive at Orem Junior High School until 7:10 a.m. but most mornings she arrives at 6:45 a.m. — as do her six coworkers.

The lunch staff once totaled 14 women but to keep lunch prices down the staff was cut in half.

Other economy moves include requiring the women to work on days which traditionally are holidays such as Parents' Day and deer season time-off. The staff reduction requires the women to prepare almost double the number of meals per hour.

At work if she's the bread worker, Susie will make rolls, hot-dog and hamburger buns and bread from scratch.

If she's the preparation lady that week, she'll peel and cut — by hand — 800 carrot sticks. When she's through with that task, she'll have another 800 celery sticks to do before she begins the preparation of the potatoes for the day's meal.

Then there's the butter. She'll cut and slice individual serving pats and wrap each one by hand.

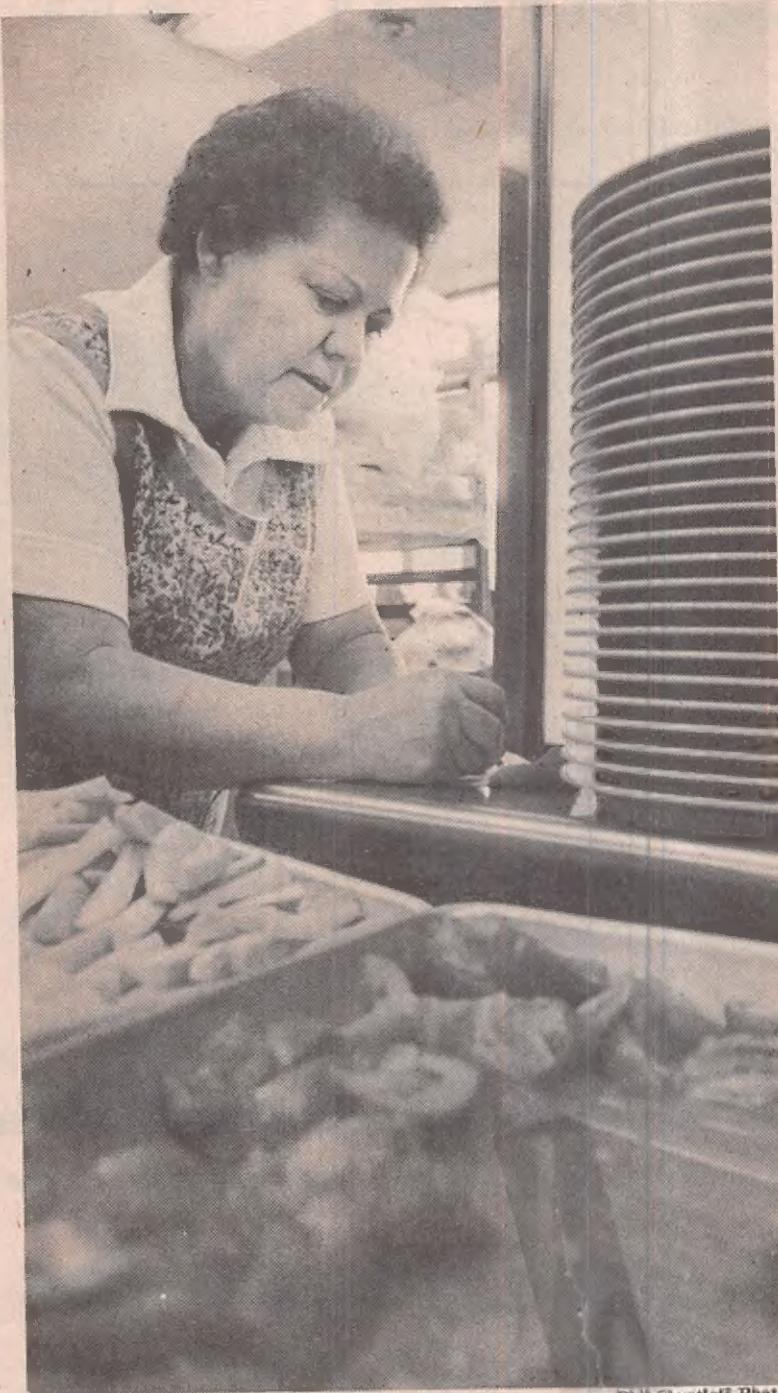
She could also do the main meal preparation. This includes cooking the meat, putting hundreds of home-made sandwiches together and making 12 gallons of gravy.

And, of course, the meals are to be served on time. Then the dishes must be washed and towels folded. Next, there's general cleanup to do. And then preparations for the next day's lunch must be completed before she goes home at 1:40 p.m.

If it's Friday, the refrigerator, walk-in freezer and oven must be cleaned and floors must be mopped, too.

"I can't think of anyone who works harder than the lunch workers do," says Alpine Superintendent Max Welker. "I also don't think they're given enough appreciation for what they do."

Susie has been a lunch worker since 1963 when she needed extra money to finance a son who was serving an LDS Church mission. Two years later she quit for a year to care for her six-month old grandson whose parents were killed in a



Phil Shurtliff Photo

Susie Jepperson's day begins at 5:30 a.m.

plane crash.

Her grandson, now 18, still lives with her. And Susie still works in the lunchroom.

Her husband died in December and so working is a necessity, but one that she says she enjoys.

"The best thing about working is being around my coworkers," she says. "I'm always glad to be back

to work on Mondays because I miss them during the weekend."

Susie is luckier than other lunch workers because she's permitted to talk while she's working. A friend at another school isn't allowed to speak during the shift unless it related to the work.

Rules for Susie and her friends have toughened too.

Once workers were allowed to buy left-over food; today they're also not permitted to do any handiwork or other personal work; this includes giving presents for coworkers.

Susie's staff needs 20 students to work in the lunchroom each day because of free meals for income families, sometimes the number of children who work for a free lunch is few.

"School lunches are a good buy," says Susie. "We work hard to prepare nutritious meals and we cook everything by scratch. We care what the children will eat, to some, it's the only meal they have that day."

Utah State Child Nutrition Director Hank Winawer says school lunches are a better buy than home-prepared sack lunches.

He cites a study that shows school lunch prices in Utah average 72 cents in elementary grades and 82 cents in secondary schools. He says it costs \$1.10 to prepare a comparable lunch at home.

Susie's friends say she's a soft-touch for a student who's forgotten lunch money. But she insists she's strict in requiring students to be respectful of property and of each other.

"I guess I say my piece and worry about it," she says.

Last week when she attended a wedding reception, a "good woman" there recognized her and delightedly asked if Susie was serving lunches.

"She remembered me," says Susie with a happy smile. "That's the best part of all."

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